REMARKS

This is in response to the Office Action of December 14, 2005. With this response, claims 1 and 33 are amended and all pending claims 1-50 are presented for consideration and favorable action.

In the Office Action, a typographical error was noted in claim 1 and the claim was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112. Claim 1 has been amended to correct the antecedent basis and it is believed that the rejection may be withdrawn.

The remaining rejections against the claims were based upon 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) or 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) in view of Longsdorf U.S. Patent No. 4,804,958. Independent claims 1 and 33 have been amended to more clearly distinguish the present invention from the device shown in the Longsdorf reference.

The Longsdorf configuration cited in the Office Action shows a general technique of controlling a loop current using output circuitry, for example, output means 90 shown in Figure 2 of Longsdorf. The final current control element in element 90 of Longsdorf is labeled current control 66.

The present invention is directed to a method and apparatus for overriding the loop current level set by current control 66. This allows the current level to be set to an alarm level even in conditions in which the normal output circuitry is malfunctioning. Parallel and serial implementations of the loop current override circuitry are illustrated in Figures 6A and 6B of the instant application.

Claim 1 has been amended to clarify that the loop override circuitry is separate from the output circuitry. It is believed that this is not shown in the Longsdorf reference. Further, claim has been amended to clarify that the loop override circuitry overrides the control of the electrical current through the loop by the output circuitry. This also is not shown in

Longsdorf. Therefore, it is believed that the rejections against claims 1-32 may be withdrawn.

Method claim 33 has been amended along similar lines. Claim 33 now includes controlling the loop current in the process control loop based upon a sensed process variable using output circuitry in a device coupled to the process control loop. Claim 33 further includes overriding control of the loop current by the output circuitry. This is not shown in the Longsdorf reference. Therefore, it is believed that the rejection against claim 33 and dependent claims 34-50, may also be withdrawn.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is believed the application is in condition for allowance. Such action is respectfully requested and respectfully submitted.

The Director is authorized to charge any fee deficiency required by this paper or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 23-1123.

Respectfully submitted,

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